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times the subterranean groves lay far beneath the surface in rotundas inaccessible from above. Then they were first seen after a long clamber underground, like gardens beneath the vaultings of sombre passages. Doves built their nests in high ledges by the skylights, and animals found refuge under the rock heaps, where Indians had built blinds of loose stones to stalk them (*p. 22*).

The work of the expedition occupied sixty days and the area examined was about one hundred miles in length by ten in breadth. Twenty-nine caves were visited and ten of these were excavated. Thirteen had archæological significance. Six yielded valuable, and three, Sabaka, Oxkintok and Loltun, decisive results. The layer of human refuse was substantially the same in all the caves, which had not been used as dwellings nor as burial-places, but only as halting-spots.

Human bones in the rubbish indicated that cannibalism had been practised. The explorers found neither copper nor gold nor silver, no jade, no gums, no preserved grains, no cloth, no weaving apparatus, no pipe, no tobacco, and they agreed upon these conclusions:

First. That no earlier inhabitant had preceded the builders of the ruined cities of Yucatan.

Second. That the people revealed in the caves had reached the country in geologically recent times.

Third. That these people, substantially the ancestors of the Maya Indians, had not developed their culture in Yucatan, but had brought it with them from somewhere else.

It is recognized that these conclusions may be upset by future revelations in some cave or caves not visited by this party, but meanwhile they stand as the outcome of a most intelligent and carefully-conducted exploration.

Mr. Mercer did not confine his observations to caves and human rubbish. His remarks on the country and the scenery, the living Mayas and their ways, have more than a passing value.

Some misprints, such as *siebo-trees* and *terra caliente*, several times repeated, should not have been allowed to pass.

The text is elucidated by more than seventy illustrations from photographs and drawings.

Lakes of North America. A Reading Lesson for Students of Geography and Geology. By Israel C. Russell, Professor of Geology, University of Michigan. 8vo. Boston, U. S. A., and London. Published by Ginn & Company, 1895.

In this volume Prof. Russell has brought together the results of his studies and observations during thirteen years' geological work for the National Government, supplemented by information drawn from the publications of the U. S. Geological Survey and several State surveys.

The history of a lake, he says in his Preface, begins with the origin of its basin, and considers among other subjects the movements of its waters, the changes it produces in the topography of its shores, its relations to climate, its geological functions, its connection with plant and animal life, etc.

There are no natural groups of lake basins, so defined that they may be easily classified, but the mode of origin supplies a good working principle of classification, and this has been adopted by the author. He describes briefly and well the depressions on new land areas, the basins due to atmospheric, aqueous, glacial and volcanic agencies, the basins formed by earthquakes, those resulting from movements in the earth's crust, from land-slides and chemical action. All these types are represented in North America. Among the mountain lakes Prof. Russell is uncertain whether to give the palm to Tahoe, or to the comparatively unknown Lake Chelan in Washington. This is a narrow, river-like sheet of water, extending westward from the Columbia River seventy-five miles into the mountains, and bordered on either hand by a continuous series of rugged peaks, that rise from five to over seven thousand feet above its surface. The valley in which the lake lies, seldom more than four miles wide, is not less than one hundred miles in length. The narrow valley bottom is filled with majestic trees and a lower vegetation of almost tropical density, and from the head of the lake the loftiest summits of the range, usually white with snow, can be seen far up the gorge beyond where boats can go.

The climate of the region is mild, almost throughout the year, and the lake is now accessible by railroad.

In his remarks on the Laurentian lakes, Prof. Russell says:

> Lake Superior still retains its position as the largest sheet of fresh water known, although the more recent discovery of Lake Victoria Nyanza has brought a rival into the field. This African lake is estimated to have an area of about 18,000, which is 12,000 square miles less than the great American lake; but when an actual survey shall have been made, it is possible that this difference will be materially decreased (p. 57).

It does not appear who estimated the area of the Victoria Nyanza at 18,000 square miles.

Whoever he may have been, he certainly did not take into account what is actually known of the lake. It extends through nearly three degrees of latitude and quite three degrees of longitude, and its outline, except in the southeast, is fairly regular.

Its area is estimated in *Longman's Gazetteer* (1895) at 32,167 square miles; in Vivien de Saint-Martin's *Nouveau Dictionnaire de Géographie Universelle* (1894), at 83,310 square kilometres=32,167 square miles. It is yet too early to decide whether it is larger or smaller than Lake Superior, but there is every reason to believe that its area greatly exceeds that of Lake Huron.

If Prof. Russell accepts an insufficient estimate for the Victoria Nyanza, he is clearly wrong when he affirms (p. 69) that the maximum depth of the Caspian, 3,000 feet, exceeds that of any other lake known. The Polish savants, Dybofski and Godliefski, who took careful soundings in Lake Baikal in 1876, found a maximum depth of 1,373 metres=4,504 feet.

Good illustrations and diagrams add to the value of this compendious work.